AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A picture coding method for coding a progressive picture signal including at least either a cinema signal part which was originally a cinema signal or an NTSC signal part which was originally an NTSC signal for television broadcasting, the picture coding method comprising:

a sampling step of sampling frames from frames in the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal using a first method and frames from frames in the NTSC signal part in the progressive picture signal using a second method; and

a coding step of coding the frames which are sampled in the sampling step,

wherein the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal is a signal that is a progressive picture signal converted from an NTSC signal which has been converted from the cinema signal, and

wherein in the first method, by sampling the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal initially at a first rate of one frame for every two frames, then at a second rate of one frame for every three frames, and then repeatedly alternating between the first rate and the second rate, a frame sequence resulting from sampling the cinema signal part is generated.

2-10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A picture coding apparatus for coding a progressive picture signal including at least either a cinema signal part which was originally a cinema signal or an

NTSC signal part which was originally an NTSC signal for television broadcasting, the picture coding apparatus comprising:

a sampling conversion unit operable to sample the input progressive picture signal using a different sampling conversion method depending on telecine conversion information indicating whether the progressive picture signal was originally a cinema signal or an NTSC signal, and to output the sampled progressive picture signal; and

a picture coding unit operable to code said progressive picture signal outputted by the sampling conversion unit,

wherein the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal is a signal that is a progressive picture signal converted from an NTSC signal which has been converted from the cinema signal, and

wherein the sampling conversion unit is operable to sample frames from frames in the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal by initially sampling at a first rate of one frame for every two frames, then at a second rate of one frame for every three frames, and then repeatedly alternating between the first rate and the second rate, so as to generate a frame sequence.

12. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium having a program stored thereon for coding a progressive picture signal including at least either a cinema signal part which was originally a cinema signal or an NTSC signal part which was originally an NTSC

signal for television broadcasting, the program causing a computer to execute ~~the following steps~~ a method comprising:

a sampling step of sampling frames from frames in the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal using a first method and frames from frames in the NTSC signal part in the progressive picture signal using a second method; and

a coding step of coding the frames which are sampled in the sampling step,

wherein the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal is a signal that is a progressive picture signal converted from an NTSC signal which has been converted from the cinema signal, and

wherein in the first method, by sampling the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal initially at a first rate of one frame for every two frames, then at a second rate of one frame for every three frames, and then repeatedly alternating between the first rate and the second rate, a frame sequence resulting from sampling the cinema signal part is generated.

13. (Canceled)

14. (New) The picture coding method according to Claim 1,

wherein the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal includes two identical consecutive frames for every five frames,

wherein in the sampling of frames at a rate of one frame for every two frames, one of the two consecutive frames is sampled, and

wherein in the sampling of frames at a rate of one frame for every three frames, a frame located in the middle in display order is sampled from the three frames which follow the two consecutive frames.

15. (New) The picture coding method according to Claim 1,

wherein the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal includes two identical consecutive frames for every five frames,

wherein in the sampling of frames at a rate of one frame for every two frames, the former of the two consecutive frames is sampled, and

wherein in the sampling of frames at a rate of one frame for every three frames, a frame located immediately prior to the two consecutive frames is sampled from the frame and the two consecutive frames.

16. (New) The picture coding apparatus according to Claim 11,

wherein the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal includes two identical consecutive frames for every five frames,

wherein in the sampling of frames at a rate of one frame for every two frames, one of the two consecutive frames is sampled, and

wherein in the sampling of frames at a rate of one frame for every three frames, a frame located in the middle in display order is sampled from the three frames which follow the two consecutive frames.

17. (New) The picture coding apparatus according to Claim 11,

wherein the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal includes two identical consecutive frames for every five frames,

wherein in the sampling of frames at a rate of one frame for every two frames, the former of the two consecutive frames is sampled, and

wherein in the sampling of frames at a rate of one frame for every three frames, a frame located immediately prior to the two consecutive frames is sampled from the frame and the two consecutive frames.

18. (New) The computer-readable medium according to Claim 12,

wherein the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal includes two identical consecutive frames for every five frames,

wherein in the sampling of frames at a rate of one frame for every two frames, one of the two consecutive frames is sampled, and

wherein in the sampling of frames at a rate of one frame for every three frames, a frame located in the middle in display order is sampled from the three frames which follow the two consecutive frames.

19. (New) The computer-readable medium according to Claim 12,

wherein the cinema signal part in the progressive picture signal includes two identical consecutive frames for every five frames,

wherein in the sampling of frames at a rate of one frame for every two frames, the former of the two consecutive frames is sampled, and

wherein in the sampling of frames at a rate of one frame for every three frames, a frame located immediately prior to the two consecutive frames is sampled from the frame and the two consecutive frames.